

thousand years. We are being reminded that we are Jews. We affirm this and bear it with pride.



THE ZIONIST FEDERATION OF GERMANY ADDRESSES THE NEW GERMAN STATE

I

The situation of the Jews in Germany has, through the events and through the legislation of the most recent time, undergone a development which makes a fundamental clarification of the problem desirable and necessary. We consider it an obligation of the Jews to assist in the untangling of the problem. May we therefore be permitted to present our views, which, in our opinion, make possible a solution in keeping with the principles of the new German State of National Awakening and which at the same time might signify for Jews a new ordering of the conditions of their existence.

These views are based on an interpretation of the historical development of the position of the Jews in Germany, which, by way of introduction, may be briefly outlined here.

II

Historical Summary

The emancipation of the Jews, begun at the end of the 18th, beginning of the 19th century, was based on the idea that the Jewish question could be solved by having the nation-state absorb the Jews living in its midst. This view, deriving from the ideas of the French Revolution, discerned only the individual, the single human being freely suspended in space, without regarding the ties of blood and history or spiritual distinctiveness. Accordingly, the liberal state demanded of the Jews assimilation into the non-Jewish environment. Baptism and mixed marriage were encouraged in political and economic life. Thus it happened that innumerable persons of Jewish origin had the chance to occupy important positions and to come forward as representatives of German culture and German life, without having their belonging to Jewry become visible.

Thus arose a state of affairs which in political discussion today is termed "debasement of Germanism" or "Jewification."

The Jews at first did not even recognize this difficulty, because they believed in an individualistic and legalistic solution of the Jewish question. Zionism (since 1897) was the first to disclose to the Jews the nature of the Jewish question. Zionist insight also enabled Jews to understand *anti-Semitism*, which they had fought until then only apologetically. The unsolved Jewish question was recognized as the basic cause of anti-Semitism; hence, a constructive solution of the Jewish question had to be found. To this end the *benevolent support* of the non-Jewish world was sought.

Zionism

Zionism has no illusions about the difficulty of the Jewish condition, which consists above all in an abnormal occupational pattern and in the fault of an intellectual and moral posture not rooted in one's own tradition. Zionism recognized decades ago that as a result of the assimilationist trend, symptoms of deterioration were bound to appear, which it seeks to overcome by carrying out its challenge to transform Jewish life completely.

It is our opinion that an answer to the Jewish question truly satisfying to the national state can be brought about only with the collaboration of the Jewish movement that aims at a social, cultural, and moral renewal of Jewry—indeed, that such a national renewal must first create the decisive social and spiritual premises for all solutions.

Zionism believes that a rebirth of national life, such as is occurring in German life through adhesion to Christian and national values, must also take place in the Jewish national group. For the Jew, too, origin, religion, community of fate and group consciousness must be of decisive significance in the shaping of his life. This means that the egotistic individualism which arose in the liberal era must be overcome by public spiritedness and by willingness to accept responsibility.

III

Proposals

Our conception of the nature of Jewry and of our true position among the European peoples allows us to frame proposals on the

regulation of the situation of the Jews in the new German state which are not considerations based on accidental constellations of interests, but which pave the way for a real solution of the Jewish question that will satisfy the German state. In this we are not concerned with the interests of individual Jews who have lost their economic and social positions as a result of Germany's profound transformation. What we are concerned with is the creation of an opportunity for the existence for the whole group, while preserving our honor, which is our most precious possession. On the foundation of the new state, which has established the principle of race, we wish so to fit our community into the total structure so that for us too, in the sphere assigned to us, fruitful activity for the Fatherland is possible.

We believe it is precisely the new Germany that can, through bold resoluteness in the handling of the Jewish question, take a decisive step toward overcoming a problem which, in truth, will have to be dealt with by most European peoples—including those whose foreign-policy statements today deny the existence of any such problem in their own midst.

Relationship to the German People

Our acknowledgment of Jewish nationality provides for a clear and sincere relationship to the German people and its national and racial realities. Precisely because we do not wish to falsify these fundamentals, because we, too, are against mixed marriage and are for maintaining the purity of the Jewish group and reject any trespasses of the cultural domain, we—having been brought up in the German language and German culture—can show an interest in the works and values of German culture with admiration and internal sympathy. Only fidelity to their own kind and their own culture gives Jews the inner strength that prevents insult to the respect for the national sentiments and the imponderables of German nationality; and rootedness in one's own spirituality protects the Jew from becoming the rootless critic of the national foundations of German essence. The national distancing which the state desires would thus be brought about easily as the result of an organic development.

Thus, a self-conscious Jewry here described, in whose name we speak, can find a place in the structure of the German state, because

it is inwardly unembarrassed, free from the resentment which assimilated Jews must feel at the determination that they belong to Jewry, to the Jewish race and past. We believe in the possibility of an honest relationship of loyalty between a group-conscious Jewry and the German state.

IV

Emigration

This presentation would be incomplete, were we not to add some remarks on the important problem of Jewish emigration. The situation of the Jews among the nations and their recurrent elimination from professional categories and economic means of livelihood, as well as desire for a normalization of living conditions, force many Jews to emigrate.

Zionism wishes to shape Jewish emigration to Palestine in such a way that a *reduction of pressure on the Jewish position in Germany* will result.

Zionism has not been satisfied merely to set forth a theoretical conception of the Jewish question, but at the practical level has initiated a normalization of Jewish life through the founding of a new national settlement of Jews in Palestine, their ancient homeland. There about 230,000 Jews have already to date been settled in a normally stratified community. The basis of Jewish settlement is in agriculture. All kinds of labor—in agriculture, manual trades, and industry—are performed by Jewish workers, who are inspired by a new, idealistic work ethic. The Palestine movement has always been encouraged by the German Government; it is a fact that the significance of Palestine for German Jewry is constantly growing.

For its practical aims, Zionism hopes to be able to win the collaboration even of a government fundamentally hostile to Jews, because in dealing with the Jewish question not sentimentalities are involved but a real problem whose solution interests all peoples, and at the present moment especially the German people.

The realization of Zionism could only be hurt by resentment of Jews abroad against the German development. Boycott propaganda—such as is currently being carried on against Germany in many ways—is in essence un-Zionist, because Zionism wants not to do battle but to convince and to build.